DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 382 278 JC 950 263

AUTHOR Schormann, Randall S.; Carpenter, Lissette F.
TITLE An On-Going, Multi-Level Orientation and Renewal Plan: An Original and an Update.
PUB DATE May 94
NOTE 27p.; Materials presented at the Annual International Conference of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development on Teaching Excellence and Conference of Administrators (16th, Austin, TX, May 22-25, 1994).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Faculty; Community Colleges; *Faculty Development; Full Time Faculty; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Instructional Development; *Instructional Improvement; Part Time Faculty; *Teacher Orientation; *Teaching Skills; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

To strengthen its traditional professional development, which relies on off-campus experts, McLennen Community College (MCC) in Waco, Texas, has developed a popular and effective in-house system. Faculty members who are experts in their own fields serve as resource leaders in faculty development opportunities for salary step-credit and in activities offered solely for academic growth. Programs include: (1) courses offered for step-credit, which focus on topics directly affecting classroom instruction at MCC and which emphasize carryover from the course to the classroom; (2) non-credit, 4-hour workshops; (3) faculty development meals, "cajolery lunches," where basic teaching skills are discussed; (4) participation by five of MCC's best instructors in local Great Teacher Workshops; (5) the Vitality in Mission program, through which seven faculty members are selected to study teaching and learning in MCC classrooms; (6) Great Teacher Connections, which links MCC faculty to top area high school teachers; (7) Partners for Teaching Excellence, which pair new instructors with experienced teachers; and (8) popcorn sessions for discussing single topics in depth. Another aspect of MCC's faculty development efforts is an on-going, multi-level orientation and renewal plan. Before the beginning of each semester, 3 days of orientation activities are attended by all new part- and full-time faculty. Throughout the year, MCC provides additional orientation and renewal activities for all faculty interested in studying the art and craft of teaching and learning. (VIM materials, the complete orientation schedule, and an updated version of the paper are included.) (KP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 382 278

An On-Going, Multi-Level Orientation and Renewal Plan: An Original and an Update

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Randall S. Schormann
Lissette F. Carpenter

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
R. Schormann
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

Materials presented at the Annual International Conference of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development on Teaching Excellence and Conference of Administrators (16th, Austin, TX, May 22-25, 1994).

JC 950 263

A PROPHET HATH HONOR IN HIS OWN COUNTRY

Randall S. Schormann
Director
Center for Professional Development
(817) 750-3560

Lissette F. Carpenter, PhD
Chair
Language Arts Department
(817) 750-3536

McLENNAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

To strengthen its traditional professional development which relies on off-campus experts, McLennan Community College has developed a popular in-house system that works. Faculty members who are experts in their own fields serve as resource leaders for salary step-credit workshops, non-credit workshops, "Great Teacher" conferences, picnic-style discussion groups, a teacher visitation/discussion program, and a partnering for teaching excellence system. Consistently high evaluations and ever-increasing participation attest to the value of the program.

Campus Description McLennan Community College (MCC), a comprehensive two-year college in Waco, Texas, offers most academic transfer areas and more than 35 vocational-technical degree plans. MCC has approximately 4,200 (FTE) students and another 5,500 students each semester involved in credit and non-credit continuing education courses, workshops, seminars, short-programs, and general interest subjects such as dancing, photography, and calligraphy. The college's market area is essentially McLennan County, but there are a number of students from throughout Texas and the nation, as well as a few international students. The average age of this student body is 27, and the over-all academic ability is typical of the national community college population.

Because of this diversity, MCC administration has placed great emphasis on the teaching process. Faculty are hired for their diverse academic backgrounds and their interest and ability in classroom instruction. MCC also has a requirement that each faculty member must enroll in course work or other approved professional development activity at least once every four years, completing a minimum of three semester hours or the equivalent thereof. These salary step-credit courses or approved equivalents, which must be paid for by the faculty member, can include graduate-level work, undergraduate work with some restriction, approved work-in-the-field, and travel, as well as other academic-level endeavors.

Traditional Approach The traditional method of achieving professional growth always seems to be to take a course or attend a conference. Each of these activities is, of course, important and necessary. However, each has some distinct disadvantages that the in-house professional development system at MCC is able to minimize. For instance, how does yet another advanced graduate-level course help a teacher work with a student who is struggling to master very basic concepts? How can an instructor relate a general graduate course to her own specific needs? How does a teacher bring conference information back to his colleagues? With the present trend of multiple concurrent sessions, one participant at any one conference can only sample the tremendous amount of varied information available. How then do an individual instructor and a college get a maximum return for professional development investments of time and money? Also, how can traditional programs take advantage of the tremendous wealth of information and experiences that a faculty member brings to an institution.

In-House Professional Development Rationale At MCC we have tried to answer these questions by adding eight unique features to the traditional avenues of professional development. These unique features capitalize on the expertise we have on our own campus. Our exemplary faculty members are often invited to share their knowledge in staff-development workshops on other campuses. Also, we often attempt to implement a new or different teaching method or philosophy and call in an outside "expert" to help set the pace, only to find that someone from within is already performing at the expert's level. Many times this coming and going is only supported by the old rule that if the expert is from out-of-town, he must know that of which he speaks. At MCC we have established a new rule of looking first to see if the prophet is already at home.

The In-House Program McLennan Community College has used "in-house prophets" in eight faculty development opportunities which are roughly divided into two broad categories: activities offered for salary step-credit, and activities offered solely for academic growth either in subject areas or in teaching skills.

1. Salary Step-Credit Courses

When a topic is considered important enough to directly affect classroom instruction at MCC, a course can be offered for step-credit. For instance, the increased popularity of the microcomputer caused a rush of faculty to microcomputer classes taught on campus. Such courses, whether specially designed or regular college offerings, must be approved for step-credit by the Vice-President of Instruction. All course assignments are oriented toward the goals and needs of faculty participants' own classes. To further insure carry-over from the course to the classroom, participants are expected to complete a substantial written project which relates the course to their respective teaching assignments. The course instructor agrees to grade the project and to allow individual differences in all assignments. Faculty members who take the course pay all the regular fees, which vary from course to course, depending upon number enrolled, lab fees, or other expenses. The instructor is paid for teaching the course.

If a needed course is not available, then one can be created. A speech teacher, for example, was contracted to design a course aimed specifically at sharpening class presentation skills necessary to help communicate subject matter to a heterogeneous student body. Approved for three salary step-credit hours, the course required 48 contact hours and included lecture/discussion sessions, teaching samples, video-taped teaching demonstrations, group analysis, one-on-one analysis with the instructor, self-analysis, and group evaluation that was microcomputer scored and ranked. As always, a substantial written project was required.

MCC has offered courses for one or two or three salary step-credits in such subjects as How to Write and Evalaute Test Items, Self-Paced Module Design, Working with the Adult Learner, Microcomputers in the Classroom, Reality Therapy, Teaching Thinking Skills, Interpersonal Communications, and Classroom Presentation Skills. The difference in step-credit units is defined by the number of required contact hours and the after class assignments.

Courses are offered throughout the year; however, the most popular time is the two weeks after spring semester ends and before the summer sessions begin.

2. Non-Credit, Four-Hour Workshops

Often, throughout the school year but especially during the two instructional-preparation days set aside before classes start, MCC schedules four-hour, non-credit workshops that cover various topics of common interest to instructors. No out-of-class work is required, and no cost is involved for the participants. Subjects range from how to teach students who are physically handicapped, to how to use the library as a teaching resource, to how to help students learn to read, to how to include more writing across the curriculum.

Again, these sessions are led by recognized authorities on our own faculty. Workshop instructors are not paid, but they are chosen with great care. All faculty members are encouraged to attend such courses but are not required to do so.

3. Faculty Development Meals

Because many college faculty are hired who have little or no teaching experience and because there is always a need to review teaching skills, MCC has started a series of "Cajolery Lunches." (See invitation form attached.) Over a lunch provided by the College, a volunteer resource leader or a team from within conducts an open discussion on a selected area of basic teaching skills. For variety, off-campus resource leaders are sometimes invited. These lunches are open to all faculty, professional staff, and administrators. The only requirement is that titles be left at the door.

These meals have become so popular that a "Cajolery Breakfast" and a "Cajolery Supper," have been added to encourage participation by part-time instructors and those instructors who always have classes scheduled through the noon hour.

Twenty to thirty percent of full time faculty regularly attend. The tendency is to say that these sessions are popular just because a "free" lunch is provided. Evaluations indicate that the lunch is a nice incentive but that when you expect, and get, three hours of a busy persons time, it is not "free."

In these sessions, whose sole purpose is to discuss the teaching process, the resource leader starts the discussion and keeps it somewhat organized. However, it does not take long for the discussion to become free-wheeling; soon everybody has something to share. The new-timers learn, the old-timers are renewed, and all are challenged with fresh insights.

4. Great Teacher-Waco Workshop

Waco, Texas, is unique in that it has four post-secondary education institutions, each with a different mission: Baylor University, a four-year private institution; Texas State Technical Institute, a major education facility with more than 55 technical vocational programs; Paul Quinn College, the oldest black four-year liberal arts college west of the Mississippi; and McLennan Community College, a two-year college with technical and liberal arts orientation.

Once each year, each of these institutions sends five of its best instructors to a local Great Teacher workshop. Activities are modeled after a national program developed by Roger Garrison. At MCC, names are submitted by our faculty, who can include their own names or names of colleagues who they feel fit the definition of a great teacher. The Professional Development Committee and the three academic deans then select the five MCC participants. The other three participating institutions use a variety of selection processes.

Since 1985 an administrator has been added from each school, because administrators who do not also teach, quickly lose touch with the classroom. By the same token, faculty often are not aware of administrators' concerns. In this informal gathering of educators, however, both groups exchange views, and communication can occur more freely.

The selected instructors, whose resource leaders come from within the group, spend 12 hours with skilled practitioners--themselves. During the two-day workshop, participants discuss teaching methods in small groups, in large groups, and over the dinner table. The rekindling that takes place is phenomenal.

In the Great Teacher-Waco workshop, the topics are teaching and identification of local resources; the results are making new friends, and getting new ideas, and perhaps eating too much.

5. Vitality in Mission (V.I.M.)
A new program was started in 1985, again to utilize our own resources. This program is based on the belief that the best place to study both teaching and learning is in the classroom. We learn by doing.

A facilitating instructor is chosen prior to each semester during which VIM will be offered. The facilitator must come from the list of past participants. The VIM announcement (see attached), which contains objectives and responsibilities, is mailed to all faculty, who may then apply to be VIM participants. Seven interested faculty are then selected. To encourage each participant to view teaching from different perspectives, an effort is made to include a variety of disciplines.

6. Great Teacher-Connections
A consistent problem for all colleges is how to communicate educational victories and concerns with area high schools who have just recently handled the same students. In 1989 MCC began the Great Teacher-Connections program aimed at this issue.

The twenty-three high schools in our recruitment area are asked to send two of their teachers who, by some method, have been identified as being from among the best. MCC faculty and administrators are asked to participate. The program is one day in length and the high school principals and superintendents are invited to lunch with the group. The discussion format for the day is similar to the Great Teacher-Waco sessions. On the evaluation form, one teacher said it was the best mini-vacation she had taken in a long while.

7. Partners For Teaching Excellence

A new instructor, even with prior teaching experience, in a new situation faces heavy demands and high stress levels. Yet these new instructors also hold a wealth of new and/or different teaching/learning ideas that could prove invaluable to other experienced teachers.

"Partners for Teaching Excellence" is a mentoring program which places a new MCC faculty member with a supportive senior colleague in one of two levels of participation.

Level one is a partnership which is a formal friend-to-friend mentoring experience. In this situation both partners exchange ideas, assist each other with required paperwork and deadlines, and visit each other's classes.

Level two represents a serious two-semester commitment to excellence in the classroom. At this level both partners are required to participate in professional development activities together, visit each other's classes, be video taped in a teaching situation, and meet often to discuss the teaching/learning process. In addition, using the MCC faculty evaluation procedure for focused study, a graduate-level research paper is required to summarize and conclude the experience. Successful completion of all requirements for level two will result in 3 salary step credits for both partners.

8. "Popcorn Sessions"

Many opportunities are scheduled each year to discuss single topics in some depth. These are not formal workshops. Topics range from a visit with the president to computer demonstrations, to hands-on writing-across-the-curriculum ideas to conference reports. The popcorn bowl and cold soft drinks lend a relaxed feeling, so good will and sharing of ideas are accomplished.

Getting Started After a topic is identified and confirmed as important to instructional concerns at MCC, the search for an on-campus resource leader begins. Instructor-leaders are selected on the basis of recognized teaching ability and superior knowledge of the topic. Leadership, strong communication skills (presentational and inter-personal), poise, humor, and creativity are major characteristics necessary to face peers in a pupil-teacher role.

An interesting aside to this new relationship: the instructor remains in the same professional role, but the peers instantly (at the sound of the bell) become students in every way. They are late for class, tired, want to do the least amount of work possible (therefore minimum acceptable standards are often set higher), are fearful of any evaluation process, talk to each other during class presentations, and anything else your own students do. And you should hear the excuses for absences! The course instructor must be self-confident and resourceful to survive with the peer relationship undamaged.

Course instructors who are knowledgeable about their topics, talented in teaching skills, and gifted with a healthy sense of humor gain a great deal of professional respect and create a positive group camaraderie that lasts long after the last session. They also grow in professional knowledge because they worked twice as hard to be twice as good in front of their peers. It is not a role for the timid and uninitiated.

Benefits of the In-House Program McLennan Community College's program of in-house development has benefited the faculty and college in several ways.

1. The courses and activities are designed to meet specific instructional needs of the faculty and of MCC.

2. They are convenient, economical, and time-efficient for the faculty.

3. They improve the faculty's instructional abilities and communication skills.

4. They encourage faculty to use new instructional techniques in the classroom and in the design of course curricula.

5. They provide live-in experts who are readily available for consulting when stumbling blocks are found in new methods, or reinforcement and encouragement are necessary.

6. They give faculty a better understanding of the student's perspective in the learning process.

7. They help faculty gain a new or renewed appreciation for the competence of their peers.

8. The informal getting-to-know-each-other activities create greater faculty unity and keep things in better perspective, especially among departments campus wide.

Evaluation Evaluation of the "Prophet at Home" concept is an informal process. At the end of each session, participants are asked to fill out a questionnaire which contains the following questions and a rating scale (see attached).

1. What was most beneficial?
2. What was least beneficial?
3. What is one idea you gained?
4. How do you think you can implement this idea in your classroom?

An open comment section is also provided, and many ideas for additional sessions have been formulated from this section. Also, some of the credit courses were designed and offered because of the demand for more information from the non-credit, four-hour sessions.

Another evaluation indicator is the number of participants. The full-time faculty and professional staff at MCC number approximately 175. Attendance at the Cajolery Lunch averages 35. Attendance at the step-credit courses ranges from 12 to 30. Participation in The Great Teacher-Waco experience is limited to six. However, an indicator of the popularity is that those six are chosen from a nomination list that averages 60.

A subtle measure of success is the amount of conversation generated and the number of phone calls created in follow-up discussions. Also, the resource leaders report that even months later they are being asked for additional information or guidance through a problem or, even better, to listen to a success story in a project attempted.

Conclusion A common attitude of regularly participating faculty in MCC's in-house professional development is that no matter what instructional topic is being presented, the activities yield new insights and techniques applicable to any subject area. The faculty believe these credit courses and activities also provide a forum for the individual exchange of teaching concerns, ideas, and methods.

Faculty members who teach credit courses are motivated to do their best instructional work in presenting the curriculum to their colleagues. They experience an intensive preparation/teaching situation when they are faced with favorably impressing their professional peers. All course instructors and resource people feel great pressure to do their finest teaching, which, in itself, improves their instructional knowledge and skills for their regular classroom audience.

Even though the MCC campus is small by some standards, it is still difficult to get to know what is taking place across campus. Couple that with diverse faculty interests and backgrounds and a demanding traditional community college student population, and a feeling of isolation and frustration can become debilitating. MCC's programs create the opportunity to reach out, to learn, to get to know where there may be help, and to find a friend. Positive attitude created by these eight innovations is still one of the best teaching aids known.

Most importantly, the regular students experience a greater number of instructors who have enriched their abilities to teach academic courses in an up-to-date, communicative, and enthusiastic manner. They interact with instructors who have recently been students and who are, therefore, more sensitive to the frustrations inherent in the learning process. An interesting side-bar occured in this respect between two teachers teamed in a level two Teaching Excellence partnership. They both taught developmental (low achiever) students and could witness the same students under different circumstances. It helped both instructors develop strategies to help the at-risk student.

Both the administration and the faculty believe the College's program of on-campus offerings for faculty professional development to be a highly effective means of improving the quality of instruction. On-campus offerings have proven to be a feasible, appropriate alternative to faculty enrollment in various post-graduate courses at other colleges and universities.

But above all, a successful program of such professional development activities must include a clear recognition of the faculty's instructional needs and interests; and it must provide maximum convenience, financial economy, and time efficiency for the faculty. And before any in-house course is offered, it must be determined, by whatever evaluation procedures are deemed appropriate, whether or not the course is valuable for the ultimate purpose of the institution--instruction of the student.

For more information, please write or call the authors at:

McLennan Community College
1400 College Drive
Waco, Texas 76708
(817) 756-6551

TO: ALL FACULTY
PROFESSIONAL STAFF
ADMINISTRATORS

Your "round to it" for the faculty development opportunity,
A CAJOLERY LUNCH – number 66

TEAM TEACHING! A concept often used, often abused, not a new teaching innovation, but a concept that has tremendous advantages for the faculty AND the student. MCC has several 'teams' that are currently using this method of instruction and, in fact, have several years experience. This session will feature team groups that will share some of the triumphs and some of the pit-falls. All are experienced with this teaching strategy or are folks who are thinking about creating a team. And you will be involved in the discussion so we hope this will encourage a lot of thinking about this teaching format.

The following MCC faculty will be involved with the breakfast or lunch: Debra Fultz/Linda Dulin, Carol Lowe/Dave Hooten, Dottie Nisbett/Sharon Stone, Jerry Jordan/Stan Mitchell.

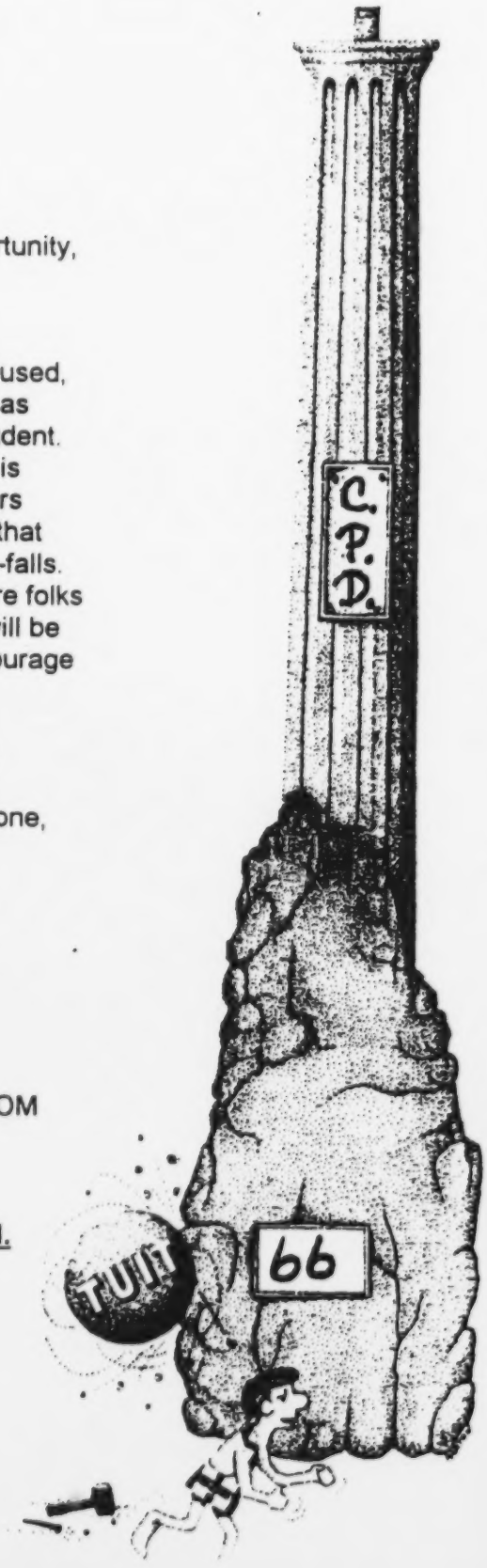
DETAILS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1995

BREAKFAST - FACULTY DINING ROOM
6:00 - 6:30 A.M. EAT
6:30 - 7:45 PROGRAM

LUNCH - STUDENT CENTER - HIGHLANDER ROOM
11:45 - 12:30 P.M. EAT
12:30 - 2:00 PROGRAM

FACULTY MEETING - LECTURE HALL - 3:30 P.M.
Refreshments available at 3:00

RSVP WITH CARLA AT EXT. 560
OR E-MAIL -- CLC BY 5 P.M. FEB. 24



November 30, 1990

TO: All Faculty
Part-time Credit Faculty
Professional Staff

FROM: Randy Schormann

R.E.: VIM, a step-credit opportunity

Plans are complete to offer the VIM program again during the Spring semester 1991. If you would like an endorsement of the VIM concept contact any of the past participants listed on page D17a of the MCC Personnel Handbook.

Lois Kerr, MCC Continuing Education and VIM participant Spring semester 1990 will be the facilitating instructor for Spring 1991.

This program is based on the belief that the best place to learn about teaching and learning is in the classroom itself. Experienced and committed faculty members can focus on their development as well as learn from each other. Faculty members will attend classes of a facilitating instructor, each other, or other instructors each week and participate in a weekly seminar to focus on the teaching/learning process. Using the classes as labs the participants will use the seminar to examine what approaches worked, which didn't, other approaches that might be tried, common teaching problems and successes, and ideas for their individual teaching.

You may choose either 3 hours salary step credit or a $400.00 voucher to be used for your further professional development. (NOTE: There will be a $50.00 charge to participants requesting step-credit.)

RESPONSIBILITY OF FACILITATING INSTRUCTOR:

1. Prepare for and teach demonstration class using a wide variety of learning activities.
2. Prepare materials and readings for, and lead, the weekly seminar.
3. Develop materials and ideas to use in own teaching.
4. Participate in the evaluation of the Program.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS:

1. Attend a demonstration class each week.
2. Prepare for, read assigned materials, attend, and participate in weekly seminar.
3. Develop materials and ideas to use in own classes.
4. Participate in the evaluation of the Program.

TO APPLY:

By January 9, 1991, fill out the standard professional development proposal form (available from Carla, ext. 560, Instructional Resource Center) and send it up through your appropriate administrative channels (do not send multiple copies to the committee). Be sure to indicate on the form whether you are requesting step-credit or the voucher.

Selections will be made and an organizational meeting will be held on Friday, January 18 at 1:30 P.M.

cc

MEMORANDUM

TO: Linda Austin
Dr. Drum
Becky Griffin
Jimmy King
Karen Lamb
Travis Looper
J. R. Olivares
[redacted]
Doris Schraeder

FROM: Lois Kerr
DATE: January 22, 1991
SUBJ: VIM Meeting Schedule

VIM meetings will be held in the Library conference room (first door to the right at the top of the stairs) on Tuesdays from 1:45-3:45 p.m., beginning January 29. We have special dispensation to brown-bag if anyone wants or needs provided we: 1)close the door, 2)clean up after ourselves, and 3)tell NO ONE that we have received said dispensation.

Topics and dates which were decided upon at our meeting on Janaury 18 are:

January 29	Affective Domain	Lois Kerr
February 05	The Intangible Art of Motivating Students	Jimmy King
February 12	How to Get the Most Out of the Course Syllabus and Course Outline	Travis Looper
February 19	Learning Styles	Karen Lamb
February 26	Test Blueprints	Becky Griffin
March 05	Fostering Writing/Reading/Thinking/Study Skills Development	Linda Austin
March 19	Different Teaching Approaches and Alternatives for Evaluating Learning	Doris Schraeder
April 02	Cultural Differences on Campus and in the Classroom	J.R. Olivares

There are five (5) open dates, some of which may be used to pursue rabbits or deepen and broaden exploration of the above topics. I would also like to hear from you if there are areas you would like to either present or have presented by someone outside the VIM group. Please bring your suggestions to the January 29 meeting.

See you in the Library conference room.

mc

WORKSHOP EVALUATION
CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
McLENNAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Name of Workshop _____ **Date** _____

1. **What was the strongest aspect of the workshop?**

2. **What was the weakest aspect for the workshop?**

3. **What activities and/or subjects should be <u>added?</u>**

4. **What activities and/or subjects should be <u>deleted?</u>**

5. **Explain one idea you learned from this session and how that might be of use.**

6. **Any general comments you care to make?**

7. **Overall, the workshop was:**

<u>AWFUL</u>			<u>ADEQUATE</u>			<u>EXCELLENT</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

AN ON-GOING MULTI-LEVEL ORIENTATION AND RENEWAL PLAN

CONFAB

JULY 27 - 29, 1994

Lissette Carpenter, Ph.D.
Director
Liberal Arts
817-750-3536

Randy Schormann
Director
Center for Professional
Development
817-750-3560

McLennan Community College
Waco, Texas 76708

AN ON-GOING ORIENTATION AND RENEWAL PLAN

Tight financial resources have caused more and more colleges to rely on part-time faculty. Because of retirements and expansion, more first-time instructors, often with great knowledge and enthusiasm but little practical experience, are coming to our campuses; conversely, instructors with much experience may be suffering burnout. Yet another type of instructor, often in the majority, is the one who is solid in subject matter, preparation, and attitude but constantly searching for a better way to reach an increasingly diverse student body. Part-time instruction, inexperience, burnout, desire for improved methods--these factors compel colleges to provide all faculty, regardless of how they might be categorized, with resources and inspiration for instructional improvement. McLennan Community College believes it does, in fact, have an orientation and renewal plan which helps all faculty reach their full potential.

COMPREHENSIVE ORIENTATION

Before the beginning of each semester, MCC places emphasis on orientation for the new instructor, both part-time and full-time. But throughout the year, the College provides additional orientation and renewal activities open to and attended by all faculty interested in studying the art and craft of the teaching/learning process. An end result is that new faculty feel comfortable with their colleagues and assignments, part-time faculty feel like an integral part of the institution, and all faculty learn from each other.

The semester begins with three days of orientation activities attended by all new part- and full-time faculty. These days are scheduled during the week before classes begin, with activities interspersed between department meetings and registration assignments. A deliberate effort is made to introduce the participants to all the people who can facilitate a wide variety of services and policies, both for the faculty in the classrooms and for their students.

Yes, during this first week we are often told that we have forced too many things into a short time. However, once classes begin, the events of the semester quickly overwhelm college personnel. Therefore, there are no other opportunities as convenient as these first days. Throughout the year, new instructors express their appreciation for the orientation week, busy as it was.

The second major scheduling consideration is the location of events. To introduce new faculty to the campus, each orientation event is held in a different building or at least in a different meeting room.

The MCC campus has eleven major buildings and other support buildings, so we are not large by many standards. But when classes start, instructors get into a routine that does not include "sightseeing." Being "forced" into seeing other facilities on campus helps the new instructor feel comfortable when they receive a memo advising her to pick up a key at the Physical Plant or telling him to direct students to the Financial Aid Office.

A look at activities, day by day, reveals the intensity and value of MCC's orientation:

DAY ONE, MORNING: In the first building of many, Personnel Services conducts a one-half day workshop on the all-important topic of getting paid and accessing benefits. Following an initial icebreaker activity, new faculty complete a blitz of paperwork--W-4's, insurance forms, parking permits--and learn College requirements such as the necessity of official transcripts on file; they also learn about College perks such as the wellness program, free tickets for outstanding theater performances or free sports tickets.

DAY ONE, LUNCH: The MCC president, his four vice-presidents, and the MCC Foundation director meet with the new instructors and share administrative visions and expectations. But perhaps most important, they provide the critical morale booster, "We're glad you are here."

DAY ONE, AFTERNOON: Scheduled in yet another building, this afternoon whirlwind activity will let new instructors see the faces and ask questions of support services administrators and staff who help make things happen at MCC. Administrators briefly describe their departments and explain the services they can provide for instructors and students. Included on the program are Counseling Services, Student Activities, Developmental Studies, Library Services, Tutorial Services, the Registrar, and the Center for Professional Development. Though somewhat overwhelming, this afternoon works: interest is high, questions are relevant, and services are later used.

DAY TWO, ALL DAY: Returning faculty join the new faculty on this day for a series of workshops highlighting campus and department activities that make life a little easier at MCC or enhance the teaching/learning process. This review really has two purposes. The new faculty see and experience some of the quality activities that they can now be a part of, and the returning faculty see new developments and techniques presented by their colleagues. Instructors and administrators may choose from workshops or demonstrations such as using electronic mail, acquiring CPR training, visiting the Technology Enhanced Curriculum Lab, learning to use Internet, or visiting the Library with its new computerized systems.

They can also attend workshops such as "Teacher as Actor" or attend, or perhaps present at, the "Showcase of Teaching Techniques," at which faculty lead paper sessions on a wide variety of topics, including NISOD. But many times, our own faculty do not know of the information their colleagues are presenting. Therefore, the Showcase day is a day to,"Strut our own stuff."

DAY THREE, ALL DAY: No specific orientation activities are planned for this day because all faculty and professional staff are involved in that wonderful event called student registration. However, the day does in fact serve as an orientation and renewal activity. When students are not seeking help, registration becomes a time when instructors can visit with their colleagues from other departments. Since each semester offers a new beginning, contagious enthusiasm often runs high concerning new equipment, new teaching approaches, new challenges, and summer accomplishments. Fact is, some of our instructors see registration as one of the main social events of the year.

DAY FOUR, MORNING: New faculty return to intense orientation activities. This morning opens with some words of welcome from the Deans of Arts and Sciences, Continuing Education, and Technical Education, who explain the MCC administrative structure. Because the three deans are responsible for most day-to-day activities on campus, it is important that faculty know who the deans are, how they feel about the teaching/learning function at MCC, and how their offices can assist instructors and students.

The remainder of the morning is devoted to the highlight of the week, a panel of MCC faculty who have been on campus for a number of years. The "old Timers', if you will. And, for the sake of interest, one or two faculty who have been at MCC for only one year also serve on the panel. These relative newcomers lend an interesting perspective, since they are able to sympathize with the new faculty because they still understand first-day butterflies in the stomach. The panel defines a "typical" MCC student and explores the variety of teaching styles found on campus. Then, time is allowed for a good old-fashioned "gab" session. The activities of the week have been planned to anticipate questions of new faculty, but this free discussion session allows new faculty to ask about unanticipated concerns. Or, our returning faculty will often identify possible new interest areas they would like to investigate with all this new talent.

It is reaffirming for new folks to hear that a typical student at MCC is no different from any other community college student and that the high quality instruction at MCC has much in common with instruction at other post-secondary institutions. Though many new instructors come to the College with a wealth of experience and training, they are still beginning a new job, with all the inherent concerns.

To let new instructors know that MCC does have its lighter side, a new activity was added in 1993. The scavenger hunt, suggested by Innovation Abstracts (Vol. XII, No. 16), was such a successful addition, it will become a regular feature of orientation. This fun activity reinforces the plan to get orientation participants into every campus building. And as they get questions answered or collect items, participants also gain opportunities to interact with workers in the various buildings. In addition, it facilitates team building with the "oldtimers," who lead the way, provide some of the answers, and do many of the introductions. Overall, the scavenger hunt is a wonderful way to do a campus tour, provide camaraderie, and efficiently cover a lot of fun-to-know-but-not-essential information.

DAY FOUR, LUNCH: Morning panel members, the three deans, and the program and division directors join the new faculty for relaxation and fun. By now, conversation indicates that the team building goals of previous activities have been met.

DAY FOUR, AFTERNOON: The agenda covers the first day in class and how to survive the paper blitz that instructors will experience from day two to the end of the semester. New faculty receive a Survival Kit, a packet full of sample enrollment and grade forms, handbooks, maps, information flyers, and just "stuff" that will make it a little easier to understand the maze of a new job and a new institution. The session facilitator and division directors devote much time to explaining the methods and justification for the paperwork, including the fact that student enrollment, class attendance through the twelfth day, and state monies are tied very closely together. The Kit provides a handy reference throughout the first week and the rest of the year. "Oldtimers" sometimes request a copy for themselves!

DAY FOUR, EVENING: For those new part-time instructors who find it impossible to attend during the day, MCC provides an abbreviated evening version of the orientation activities. Upper level administrators, along with the personnel director and division directors of new faculty, join the new part-timers for an evening meal. On occasion, a new full-time instructor who had to miss a regularly scheduled day activity may join the group. Following the traditional welcome and explanation of expectations and available resources, the facilitator and appropriate division directors devote most of the evening to reviewing the Survival Kit.

The opportunity to meet College officials and having someone take the time to explain requisite paperwork goes a long way in convincing new part-timers that they are not alone in the pursuit of excellent teaching. And since part-timers are required to attend at least one professional development activity per semester, new part-timers can use this activity to satisfy that requirement.

DAY FIVE, MORNING: The early morning of the fifth day is reserved for various department activities and a college-wide faculty and professional staff meeting. In addition to other agenda, each new instructor has been assigned to one new friend, whose responsibility it becomes to formally introduce his partner to the entire faculty and staff. This event, with friendly laughter and applause, does take a little time. However, it is definitely worth the effort. By the end of the week new employees have met enough people and learned enough about their new campus to really feel like part of the family. And at least a few of the nervous "butterflies" are flying in formation and stomachs are a little more calm.

DAY FIVE, AFTERNOON: Though some department activities might be scheduled during this time, the afternoon is generally reserved for preparing for the first day of class. And the battle cry is, "Yikes, they're here!"

ON GOING RENEWAL

The first week of the year, then, provides orientation and renewal for new and returning faculty, but the activities do not stop. Throughout the semester there are a variety of other events scheduled to carry on the idea that we must all continually study the art and craft of teaching and continually reach out to each other with ideas and support. New, returning, and part-time faculty eagerly participate in on-going staff development, though the year's professional development opportunities are voluntary.

MCC offers a rich sampling of activities to encourage continued education. Mentoring is not a new idea, but it does provide important resources for participating faculty. In many departments, an established faculty mentor is assigned to each new faculty member. This mentor partnership can take the form of just a friend-to-friend, "I'll-help-you-get-through-the-fog relationship," or it can be more formal. New and returning faculty in a formal mentoring relationship can participate in "Partners for Teaching Excellence," through which, for two long semesters, they will be partners for studying some phase of teaching and learning. A variety of requirements are keyed to take advantage of the fact that a new faculty member who may have some significant teaching experience and/or current information still may feel uncomfortable because of a new job and place. On the other hand, an established faculty member who knows the MCC routine may need new inspiration, which the new instructor might be able to supply through fresh ideas and enthusiasm. Thus, both instructors and all their students can benefit.

How many of you have taken the time to visit a colleague's classroom and observe each other's teaching style? MCC has created a formal process to make this happen. It is called The Vitality in Mission or VIM class.

In this semester-long program, five to ten faculty plus a facilitator meet once a week to study teaching and learning. During the semester each participant observes the teaching in classes of ten other instructors, and each participant joins with a classmate to critique videotaped segments of themselves in the process of teaching. VIM members must also present a research report on a topic of significance to community college education. Finally, each participant prepares a written evaluation of all aspects of the VIM experience. Throughout the semester, participants are expected to give frank and caring feedback to other group members. VIM, after all, has as its purpose the provision of a safe environment in which to study and learn more about the teaching/learning process. VIM also becomes an excellent therapy group.

Cajolery events provide another source of renewal. All of us know that at a conference, workshop, or seminar, one of the most important places to get information or learn more about an issue is over the snack table. A second fact is that it is often difficult to come home from a stimulating conference and figure out a way to share new ideas with colleagues. Therefore, our Cajolery events were started to provide opportunities for sharing. On Cajolery day (two each semester), a breakfast and a lunch are served; the breakfast allows part-time faculty and others with lunch time schedule conflicts to attend. A topic for and about the classroom is the agenda item for the day. The topics range from student/faculty rights, computers in instruction, grading, British literature taught in England, writing across the curriculum, thinking skills, humor in the classroom, to conference, seminar, or workshop reports. The designated faculty facilitator is responsible for initiating the discussion and keeping it going, but other faculty quickly become a part of the spirited discussions.

Books 'n' Coffee and Stage 'n' Coffee, new events this year, illustrate the premise that renewal can come from events that are just plain fun. In Books 'n' Coffee, a volunteer selects a book to be read by faculty participants and then leads a discussion of that book. Though a volunteer may select any book he or she wishes, selections are generally light reading. The purpose of the event is to get better acquainted with colleagues and to have an outlet for good conversation.

McLennan Community College has an excellent theater department which presents four outstanding productions each year. Yet, the students, and to a lesser extent the theater faculty, seldom get to hear the rest of the faculty's responses to the productions. Stage 'n' Coffee provides that opportunity. Participants enjoy getting together to listen to and share thoughts about each performance. Everyone involved with the production, including students, is encouraged to participate. Therefore, not only faculty profit from the discussions; student performers are able to hear, in a safe environment, comments about their work from someone other than their drama instructors.

Probably no area on modern campuses demands more faculty development than that of computer technology. Because faculty are eager to learn more about the computers that are becoming a part of their offices and classrooms, MCC offers a wide variety of software-specific classes throughout the year. The computer techie can learn about the latest development, but the computer novice can feel comfortable beginning with the basics. Not only does mastering a computer operation give instructors a personal lift, but the skills also find their way into the classroom in the form of more creative handouts and syllabi, as well as more stimulating instructional activities.

In 1993, a Federal Title III grant allowed MCC to install what we call a Technology Enhanced Curriculum Lab. The TEC Lab is staffed by an instructional design specialist and a desk-top publishing specialist, who offer individualized and group instruction in the use of computers in the classroom and office. A multi-media coordinator is also available to assist with the creation of sound tracks and visual images. The lab is equipped with a variety of state-of-the-art, fully equipped computer stations, a variety of software (including PowerPoint and Authorware), CD-ROM capability, and video disc machines.

Even though McLennan Community College is small by some standards, it is still difficult to get to know the wealth of skills and abilities available on campus. Couple that with a demanding and diverse student population, and the feeling of isolation and frustration can become debilitating. Sprinkle in the fact that part-time instructors, in most cases, are leading a second life at another work situation, and you can understand the difficulties of providing a comprehensive professional development program.

But MCC's orientation and renewal programs that encourage participation by all faculty create the opportunity to reach out, to learn, to get to know where there is help, to find a friend. A common attitude of full- and part-time faculty who regularly participate in the College's orientation week and renewal events is that no matter what instructional topic or event is being presented, the activities yield new insights, techniques, and camaraderie necessary to a successful educational institution.

Positive attitude is still one of the best teaching aids known. And if an attitude needs a face-lift, MCC also offers a variety of humor workshops to add more smilage to faculty life. These humor workshops emphasize the connection between creativity, thinking skills and a sense of humor. The sessions end with a lesson in juggling three brightly colored scarfs, a feat which helps participants understand that failure is dress rehearsal and obtaining perfection is one of the great impossibilities that keep us humble, human and Great Teachers.

As a result of MCCs orientation and renewal program, the students experience a greater number of instructors who have enriched their abilities to teach academic courses in an up-to-date and enthusiastic manner. They interact with instructors, both full- and part-time, who have recently been students and who are, therefore, more sensitive to the frustrations inherent in the learning process.

Both the administration and the faculty believe the College's program is a highly effective means of improving the quality of instruction. The ease of getting volunteers to help in any aspect of the orientation and renewal activities provides a strong testament to the popularity and worth of the events.

Above all, a successful program like the one just described must be based on a clear recognition of all the faculty's instructional needs and interests, while providing maximum convenience, financial economy, and time efficiency for all participants. And before any similar activities are started or allowed to continue, it must be determined, by whatever evaluation procedures are deemed appropriate, whether or not the activity is valuable for the ultimate purpose of the institution--instruction of the student.